



**STEWARDSHIP/  
PRAYER MINISTRIES**  
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# Stewarding Revival Sermon Notes

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# “Weep Between the Porch and the Altar” – Joel 2:12-18

## INTRODUCTION

- Story of the Asbury Revival, 1970. This story illustrates importance of repentance to revival.
- Over the next few meetings, we will examine some critical elements of revival as they appear in Scripture and are further confirmed by stories of historical revivals. These elements are prayer, missions/ gospel proclamation, and unity.
  - We are dividing prayer into two categories: prayers of repentance and prayers of petition (wherein we ask God to do something). In this message, we consider the necessity of repentance as it relates to revival. In the next message, we will cover our need to ask God for revival.
- This text in Joel confirms the relationship between repentance and revival. 1) Rend hearts, return to Lord because He is gracious and merciful; He may relent. 2) Blow the trumpet, gather the people, weep between porch and altar, then Lord will be zealous for His people.
  - There is a definite relationship between repentance and revival. You can have repentance without revival, BUT you can't have revival without repentance.
  - Joel lived about 250 years before destruction of Temple. He spoke about Day of Lord and called the people to repentance before judgment.

## WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

- See the principles of repentance here. It is more than mere confession. Repentance happens when someone is so grieved over sin that they not only confess their sin but also turn from it. It is a change of direction. There is no repentance without turning, vv12-13.
- The Holy Spirit, through Joel, was calling for national repentance. Look how far-reaching the call to repentance was! Consecrate a fast, call a solemn assembly to mourn over corporate sins.
  - Gather everyone, from oldest to youngest, even nursing infants.
  - The bride and groom were to leave their wedding day to participate.
  - The priests were to mourn between the porch and altar in front of the Temple.
  - All of life was to stop so people could give priority to repentance and prepare for Day of Lord.
- Evan Roberts's four requirements for revival: 1) Repent of any unconfessed sin. 2) Stop any doubtful habit. 3) Immediately obey promptings of the Spirit. 4) Publicly confess Christ.
  - Here again, is the formula for repentance. Confess sin. Begin to obey God from your heart. Confess Christ. There is a turning from sin that is necessary.

## HOW CAN I DO THIS? HOW CAN I BECOME REPENTANT?

- There is only one way that I know. You have to be desperate. You have to be so hungry for God that sin loses its attractive and pleasing quality. This is not a work of the flesh; you can't force it. It is a work of spirit; it is your spirit's response to the Holy Spirit. ASK GOD FOR HELP!
- This text, sounds like 2 Chronicles 7:14. If..., then.... If you ask for the blessing of God without repentance, you're being foolish. Amos 3:3. To enjoy His presence, must go His way.
- God is calling you to offer Him heartfelt repentance, not a show. Rend your hearts, not your garments.
  - You can talk a lot about wanting revival and needing revival. But you shouldn't say another word about it until you make things right with God. Otherwise, it's empty talk.
  - Don't wait another minute. God is gracious and merciful. He may relent and leave blessing.

# “Whatever you ask, I will do” – John 14:13-14

## TEACH THE TEXT

- We are about to deal with what is possibly one of the most dangerous passages of Scripture. But it is a desperately needed text in this day and time. We must get motivated to hit our knees. Prayer is essential.
  - We are continuing our examination of some critical elements of revival as they appear in Scripture and are further confirmed by stories of historical revivals. These elements are prayer (to include both repentance and petition), missions/gospel proclamation, and unity.
  - In this message, we consider the necessity of petitioning God to bring revival to the church.
- Jesus says this on the night before cross; Judas is gone. Jesus is consoling the remaining apostles to help them understand how their relationship is changing. In verse 12, He says they will do greater things than He has done. This will be accomplished by prayer. Then in verse 15, He encourages them to lovingly obey Him.
- That is the context of this passage. God answers our prayers, so we can continue the work of Jesus. The other end of the passage includes a call to obedience. So, I think, both of these are important – the work of Jesus and obedience to Jesus. Keep this promise in its context. Otherwise, you will have disaster.

## WE HAVE A GOOD GOD

- Consider the ramifications of this promise from God. And He didn't just say it once. He said it twice! "If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it." We tend to have two different over-reactions. 1) Abuse the promise out of context, or 2) Explain it away.
  - Try to avoid both. We have already set this passage in the context of service and obedience. Now, refuse to explain it away. Let Jesus' promise stand.
- The Lord cares about us. He knows our needs and wants. He is kind and gracious. He loves us, wants to see us succeed, and treats us as kind Father who wants to bless children. He looks for ways to bless.
  - Remember, this is the confidence Jesus showed. He said to Peter, "I've prayed for you, so when you're restored." Before He raised Lazarus, he prayed to the Father: "I know you always hear me." Are you certain of God's favor when you pray?
- The Lord is working for the glory of God. The glory of God is the supreme good in the universe. If He can do anything to magnify God, He will do it. He's not being selfish; He's upholding what is right.
  - And this is for our good, too. If God does not maintain the right, then there are no guarantees.

## APPLICATION

- Pray with confidence. Especially, pray with me for God to revive His church. We don't have any hope at all unless God intervenes in our lives, communities, and country.
- We are looking for great blessing. We need it! The spiritual landscape today is bleak.
  - Historians have compiled lists of recent revivals in the western world. J Edwin Orr's list: First Evangelical Awakening 1725-1775; Second Awakening 1792-1822 (17 years intervening); Third Awakening 1830-1847 (8 years intervening); Fourth Awakening 1858-1898 (11 years intervening); Fifth Awakening 1900-1915 (2 years intervening)
  - The conclusion of many historians is that more than 100 years have passed since the last great move of God in our country. No one in this room has seen widespread revival.
  - Why not us? Why not now? Pour yourselves out in prayer to God. James 4:2 says we do not have because we do not ask.
  - Don't let another generation go by. Be the generation that God uses to finish His work.
- **Leonard Ravenhill on desperate prayer and revival.** Will you join me? Begin now. Continue.

## Leonard Ravenhill on prayer and revival

Comparing spiritual revival to labor pains and physical birth: "There is no revival in history that has not been preceded by travail. At least I can't find one." And, "The only reason you don't have revival in your church is that you are willing to live without it!"



# The Purpose of Revival - Acts 1:8

## INTRODUCTION

- What would you say if someone asked you this question: “Why does God bring revival to the church?” What do you suppose God would say about the reason for revival?
- Jesus gives us the answer in Acts 1:8. He spoke this in His last moments on Earth before the ascension.
- He says that His people would receive power after the Holy Spirit comes on them. Then, they would be His witnesses. His purpose in sending the Spirit is to empower witness. When He does any spiritual work in His people, it is to energize and empower us for witness.
  - We are continuing our examination of three critical elements of revival as they appear in Scripture and are further confirmed by stories of historical revivals. These elements are prayer, missions/gospel proclamation, and unity.
  - In this message, we consider the global mission as a key purpose for revival.

## HISTORICAL EXAMPLE OF REVIVAL AND MISSION

- Tell the story of the Moravian believers and the 100-year prayer meeting.
- From that furnace of prayer and love came a missionary movement that predated William Carey. Moravian evangelists impacted their own part of the world and also traveled abroad to share the gospel. On a trip to the American colonies, a group of Moravians met and influenced a young John Wesley.
- The Moravians are a great example of a people set ablaze with revival fire. Once energized, they could not keep this work of God silent. They had to share, like the apostles before them, **Acts 4:20**.

## WE ARE TO BE ON THE GO, MAKING DISCIPLES

- The purpose of revival is energizing and empowering witness. But we live in a church culture that asks God to visit us with His Spirit so we can have a good time in church on Sunday. Are we giving God a reason to continually pour out His Spirit on us, or are we squandering His blessing on ourselves?
- Illustration of the boy who squandered his lunch money.
- In the Old Testament, if drought or locusts or conquerors came, Israel did not have to wonder why. The prophets reminded them that they had sinned. The American church today is in decline, yet we wonder why. Could it be that we have not been about our Father’s work? Are we squandering the blessing?

## APPLICATION

- The call of Christ could not be more clear. He intends for each of us to be on mission. Do you know how He intends for you to be involved? Seek direction from Him if you don’t know. Seek forgiveness from Him if you do know but have not been obedient.
- The good news is that God is merciful and that He wants to use us more than we want to be used. He wants to bless us more than we want to be blessed.
- Yield to Him, and be filled with His Spirit for service.

# “There the Lord Commands the Blessing” – Psalm 133

## INTRODUCTION

- We have been considering the three most common elements of revival: prayer, missions, and unity. Of the three, unity is the most lacking element in churches. It is probably the most difficult to achieve.
- But it is not some secondary issue. It is also essential to revival, and it has the potential to radically transform church and culture and the future.
- These elements of revival are not a formula or recipe because formulas and recipes yield guaranteed results if you follow them correctly. We trust God, not ourselves, to produce revival as He chooses. However, if there is a revival guarantee in scripture, it seems to be in Psalm 133!

## WHAT DOES PSALM 133 HAVE TO SAY ABOUT UNITY AND REVIVAL?

- Psalm 133 begins by talking about how good and pleasant it is when the family of God lives together in unity. Then it describes how good and pleasant it is in God’s sight. Unity in God’s family is as sacred and soothing as the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and beard. It is as refreshing as the dew on Hermon.
- But that language about the anointing oil and the dew is incidental. Although it is inspired text, it is beside the point of the psalm. In fact, you could lift those parts out of the psalm altogether and not lose the main point. Read the beginning and ending of the psalm together to find the main point.
- It is good and pleasant when God’s family lives together in unity because there (wherever God’s family lives in harmony together) God commands the blessing. He doesn’t permit the blessing. He commands the blessing. What blessing? Life forevermore, or perpetual revival and spiritual newness.
  - Unity is absolutely critical to the future of individuals, families, and churches. Do you want to share the blessing? Love one another, and teach others to be of one heart and one mind.
  - Whenever we focus on minor issues and foment division, we are wrong. That is contrary to the heart of God.

## WHAT IS BIBLICAL UNITY?

- This is an important question. The obvious answer is that biblical unity is a unity that has Christian scripture as its basis. “We may not agree on anything else, but we agree on the central message of scripture; AND that which binds us is greater than anything that would divide us.”
- According to AW Tozer
  - This unity is not: forcing identical theological views about secondary issues OR oneness due to passivity and compromise where no one cares to have an opinion.
  - Instead, it is: Oneness in determination to glorify God alone, United absorption in God’s doing, Oneness in determination to see God’s wonders, Unity in prayer for God’s outpouring, Oneness in resolution to put away forbidden things.
  - Tozer also said, “The Holy Ghost comes because we are a united people, not to make us a united people.... Unity is necessary for the outpouring of the Spirit of God.”
- Unity happens when we are all free to be who we are in Christ. That is not to say that we excuse open, obvious sin. Nor is it to say that we should surrender convictions. But we do give each other the freedom to follow Christ as we are led, and we love one another despite differences on lesser matters.

## APPLICATION

- A historical example of God blessing unity among his people is Bertha Smith’s story of praying for Ida Culpepper and the Shangtung Revival. God blessed when His people put aside differences.
- What could God do in your personal relationships if unity existed? In your family? In your church?
- You have an opportunity to work for peace and unity in God’s family. When God’s people are united, God commands the blessing. He calls us to an unforced unity that is based on a common love for the Lord and on a commitment to His word. You have to model it, nurture it, and promote it.

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